Lecture To Shine New Light On Charity

by Steve Markel, Ocean Reef Community Foundation President

Have you ever wondered about the effectiveness of a nonprofit program you've contributed to or been involved with? Have you asked yourself if a favorite charity is truly helping people in the long term? Is it a real solution? Could it be doing more harm than good by encouraging dependence?

Because I have asked these questions myself, I was impressed when I recently met the new Executive Director of our hometown YMCA in Richmond, Virginia. He spoke of a book he read by Robert Lupton which impacted the way he looks at every program offered by the Y and other nonprofits he collaborates with.

That is how Robert Lupton entered my world and, in reading his book "Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help (And How to Reverse It)," I found many insights that can be applied in all types of social programs today.

It is very encouraging to see nonprofit leaders taking a fresh look at so many long-standing programs and finding ways to make them better and more effective. Excellent feedback on a presentation by Lupton in Richmond led me to believe more organizations should be exposed to his message and to work with our local Foundation to introduce his ideas and strategies to our philanthropic Ocean Reef members.

Guest Speaker Robert Lupton

With that in mind, bringing Robert Lupton to Ocean Reef became a priority. Lupton is a veteran activist with firsthand knowledge of how good intentions can have unintended, dire consequences for those in need. His book and talk offer proven strategies and tools developed with years of experience to create lasting change. In his upcoming talk, he will offer many examples of how funders and organizations can step away from toxic charity towards transformative charity.

The Ocean Reef Community Foundation is pleased to host Lupton for a complimentary talk, shining new light on fresh and thoughtful ways to empower those in need. I encourage all at Ocean Reef to take the opportunity to listen to Lupton speak on Wednesday, March 11 at 9:00 a.m. at the Ocean Reef Cultural Center (with coffee, tea and Danish served from 8:30 a.m.). We also are interested to include any local nonprofits you support in a second presentation especially for charities at 1:30 pm.

Please respond to foundation@oceanreef.com or (305) 367-1707.